
Introduced by Senator Hollingsworth

February 22, 2005

An act to add Section 2330.2 to the Family Code, relating to dissolution of marriage.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1031, as introduced, Hollingsworth. Dissolution of marriage: family counseling.

Existing law provides for commencement of proceedings for the dissolution of marriage upon the filing of a petition for dissolution. The court is required, if it appears that there is a reasonable possibility of reconciliation, to continue the proceeding for the dissolution of the marriage for a period not to exceed 30 days. Existing law also establishes the family conciliation court, which may be implemented by the superior court in each county, to provide means for the reconciliation of spouses and the amicable settlement of domestic and family controversies.

This bill would require the parties to a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, if minor children are involved, to complete 4 hours of family counseling, either together or separately, during the 30-day period immediately following the filing of the petition for dissolution of marriage.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of
- 2 the following:
- 3 (a) Three out of five divorces involve children.

1 (b) Since 1970, one million children per year are victims of
2 divorce.

3 (c) Children of divorce are twice as likely to drop out of
4 school, one and one-half times as likely to be out of work and out
5 of school, seven times more likely to be in poverty, and three
6 times more likely to have a child out of wedlock.

7 (d) The state bears huge financial burdens dealing with the
8 fallout from divorce in the form of welfare, corrections, and other
9 social programs.

10 (e) Fewer than one-third of parental divorces occur because of
11 high conflict, and children benefit from divorce only when they
12 are removed from violent or abusive situations.

13 (f) Research shows that divorce often impoverishes women and
14 children. About one-fifth of women who apply for welfare
15 benefits for the first time do so because of divorce or separation,
16 and about one in four of those women are still welfare dependent
17 five years later.

18 SEC. 2. Section 2330.2 is added to the Family Code, to read:

19 2330.2. In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, if minor
20 children are involved, the parties shall complete four hours of
21 family counseling, either together or separately, during the
22 30-day period immediately following the filing of the petition for
23 dissolution of marriage.